



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/642,527	08/15/2003	Joseph P. Errico	F-274	3169

51640 7590 06/15/2006

SPINE MP
LERNER, DAVID, et al.
600 SOUTH AVENUE WEST
WESTFIELD, NJ 07090

EXAMINER

PELLEGRINO, BRIAN E

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 06/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/642,527

Applicant(s)

ERRICO ET AL.

Examiner

Brian E. Pellegrino

Art Unit

3738

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/18/06
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Terminal Disclaimer

The person who has signed the disclaimer has not stated the extent of his/her interest, or the business entity's interest, in the application/patent. See 37 CFR 1.321(b)(3).

The submission failed to establish the ownership interest of the assignee and thus is not approved.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 9-11,13-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Harrington (5893889). Fig. 2 shows an intervertebral spacer device with a first baseplate **34** having a post **45** with a ball **46** at a head end of the post directed toward a second baseplate or convex structure **54** with a bore therein to receive and permit angulation of the ball in the socket **55**. It is noted that Harrington discloses the second baseplate having a second part **32** and first part **54** in Fig. 2. The perimeter regions of the first baseplate and convex structure have corresponding contours. The baseplates also have osteoinductive contact surfaces in the form of pins **38** on the outward facing surface. It can also be seen that the curvate pocket **51** of the second baseplate has a spring member **69** housed therein. It can be construed that because of the location of the spring member it is between the first and second parts of the second baseplate.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harrington '889. Harrington is explained supra. However Harrington fails to disclose the spring member is ring shaped. It is noted that Harrington discloses the second baseplate having a second part **32** and first part **54** in Fig. 2. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the spring means to be ring-shaped, since applicant has not disclosed that using a ring-shaped spring member provides any advantage, or solves a stated problem, or is used for any particular purpose. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with the spring member as taught by Harrington or the claimed ring-shaped spring member in claim(s) 12 because both spinal implants perform the same function of accepting the compressive load applied to the outward surface by the vertebrae.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double

Art Unit: 3738

patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-6,8,9,14,15,17,19 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1,4-8,10,12,15,16,19,20 of copending Application No. 10/642528. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because this application's claims are merely broader than the pending claims of 10/642528. See *In re Goodman*.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 1,2,5-7,9,13-20 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1,2,5-7,9,13-20 of copending Application No. 10/642524. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because this application's claims are merely broader than the pending claims of 10/642524. See *In re Goodman*.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 3/27/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The Double Patenting rejection is maintained because the terminal

Art Unit: 3738

disclaimer was not approved. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the spring member between the parts of the same baseplate) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). It should be noted that the first and second parts of Harrington are of the "same" baseplate, but the spring member is not contacting both first and second parts of the baseplate. However, the recitation that the spring member engages both the first and second parts of the baseplate is not recited in the rejected claims. Thus the rejection over Harrington is maintained.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

Art Unit: 3738

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian E. Pellegrino whose telephone number is 571-272-4756. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7am to 4:30pm. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached at 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TC 3700, AU 3738

BRIAN E. PELLEGRINO
PRIMARY EXAMINER

